

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

JOYCE E. DUDLEY
District Attorney



DA 01-563

RELEASE NUMBER

February 5, 2020

RELEASE DATE

Joyce E. Dudley

APPROVED BY JOYCE E. DUDLEY, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Kevin Weichbrod, Deputy District Attorney

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

Re: People v. Derrick John Thompson 18CR08676

District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today that on January 26, 2020, Derrick Thompson, age 23, pled guilty to all felony counts as charged in a vehicle evading collision, which left a victim fighting for her life.

The defendant was charged with and pled guilty to: Evading an Officer Causing Injury, Leaving the Scene of an Accident Causing Permanent Injury and Conspiracy to Possess Marijuana for Sale. The defendant also admitted to the special allegation of Personally Inflicting Great Bodily Injury causing a comatose condition due to brain injury.

The defendant pled guilty to the Court at the commencement of jury selection, because prosecuting attorney Deputy District Attorney Kevin Weichbrod refused to offer a plea bargain. On February 4, 2020, despite the prosecutor's request for additional time in prison, Superior Court Judge Brian Hill sentenced the defendant to eight (8) years state prison.

The case stemmed from events on Tuesday, September 4, 2018, around 4:00 p.m. when the Ventura Police Department Officers attempted to pull over the defendant while he was driving with his friends on the shoulder of the U.S. 101, heading south near Olive Mill road exit. The defendant fled from officers, driving 45-60 miles per hour along Butterfly Beach on a crowded summer day. The defendant lost control of the vehicle while turning right from Channel Drive onto Butterfly Lane. The victim, a tourist, was staying at a nearby house with several friends when she was struck by the defendant's vehicle. The defendant immediately fled the scene, while the victim fought for her life in a coma for several weeks. Inside the vehicle, officers located eight kilograms of marijuana (17.6 lbs) and over \$20,000 in cash. A collaborative agency response headed by California Highway Patrol Investigating Officer Young and his team, Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office, Ventura Police Department and Ventura District Attorney's Office Investigators, led to the defendant being located, apprehended and extradited from Saint Paul, Minnesota.

District Attorney Joyce Dudley stated, "This case was a series of dangerous criminal choices that resulted in a horrendous conclusion. The victim has made a miraculous recovery but will still live with the injuries inflicted by this defendant for the rest of her life."
